

Chapter No. 2037
19/HR26/R2120
CST / FF

***HOUSE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 70***

Originated in House



Clerk

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 70

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE SERVICE AND CAREER OF MAJOR CAPTAIN BRADY TONTH, JR., IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF BECOMING THE FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN MISSISSIPPIAN TO COMPLETE THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE PILOT TRAINING SCHOOL, AND RECOGNIZING HIM AS A MISSISSIPPI LIVING LEGEND IN OBSERVATION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH.

WHEREAS, the State of Mississippi is replete with a rich and storied history of greatness and the successes of firsts, as is evidenced by the life, service and career of Vicksburg resident, Major Captain Brady Tonth, Jr., an individual of high esteem and caliber; and

WHEREAS, the eldest of four children born in Mound Bayou, Mississippi, and raised by his grandfather and great-grandmother in Belzoni on meager household earnings of less than \$150.00 per month, Major Tonth's humble beginning in the impoverished Mississippi Delta serves as the perfect juxtaposed backdrop for the narrative of his life of success that has continued to be a source of inspiration for all who hear it; and

WHEREAS, a 1969 graduate of McNair High School after completing his formal education at McNair Elementary, Major Tonth, who possessed an insatiable appetite for learning, attended Mississippi Valley State University on a band scholarship, where he played drums and graduated in the top five percent of the Class of 1973 with a degree in political science and as a member of the prestigious Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity; and

WHEREAS, poised for greatness and destined to make his mark in the world and secure his rightful place in the annals of African-American history, Major Tonth's ascent to notable recognition commenced in 1973 when he became the first ROTC pilot to be commissioned as an officer to graduate from his collegiate alma mater and, shortly thereafter, became the first African-American trainee from the State of Mississippi to complete Air Force Pilot Training School at Columbus Air Force Base in Columbus, Ohio, which afforded him his second commission as a licensed certified pilot; and

WHEREAS, in 1979, Major Tonth joined the Mississippi Air National Guard, becoming the first African-American pilot to fly for the guard, serving meritoriously until he was called back to active duty in 1981 and devoting more than 20 years of service to the United States Armed Forces, serving in both foreign conflicts of Desert Storm and Desert Shield, a time at which he earned the distinction of being the first African-American pilot to transport

survival goods to a major war during Operation Desert Storm, which eventually enabled him to attain the rank of major; and

WHEREAS, after his seventh year with the United States Air Force, Major Tonth became a commercial pilot with American Airlines, after having moved up from ticket agent, flight engineer, co-pilot and finally captain in 1986, the same year he would serve as captain of the first all African-American flight crew in the company's history; and

WHEREAS, the modest possessor of a myriad of historical firsts, others significant to Major Captain Tonth's credit, include being the: first African-American pilot to fly a passenger jet from the Jackson-Evers International Airport; first African-American pilot to fly a private jet for actor, Morgan Freeman; first and only African-American pilot from Mississippi certified to fly 26 aircrafts, both private and commercial; first African-American pilot to achieve the highest rating any pilot can receive in the State of Mississippi; and first president of the Vicksburg-Warren County Alumni Association for Mississippi Valley State University; and

WHEREAS, now in the joys of retirement, surrendering his wings almost 18 years ago shortly after the 9/11 events with more than 30 years of flight service to his credit, and after having flown aircrafts like the T-37, T-38, KC-135, C-123, C-130, C-141, Boeing 727, Super 80, Boeing 757 and Boeing 767, Major Captain Tonth is the first and only African-American certified,

commercial, passenger coach driver for Tougaloo College and Alcorn, Jackson State and Mississippi Valley State Universities; and

WHEREAS, Major Captain Tonth's many accomplishments are documented proof that one's environment does not dictate the level of success one can attain in life when grounded in faith and "belief in God, effort and determination," and continue to be a driving force for his active civic and religious affiliations with such organizations as: Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity; NAACP; Blacks in Government; A Hundred Black Men for Progress in Warren County; and Greater Grove Street Baptist Church, where he serves on the Deacon Board, Executive Committee and as chairman of the Black History Committee; and

WHEREAS, throughout every major move in his life and career, Major Captain Tonth has enjoyed the love, support and inspiration of his wife and college sweetheart, the former Fannie Woodson, whom he made his wife during their senior year at Valley, as well as their two children, Brady III and Tonya Tonth Naylor, and three grandchildren, Jazza, Randy III and Trenton; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to pay tribute to living legends of our community like Major Captain Tonth, who are the trailblazers that continue to inspire the birth of newfound success in the lives of the generations that follow:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING

THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the service and career of Major Captain Brady Tonth, Jr., in acknowledgment of becoming the first African-American Mississippian to complete the United States Air Force Pilot Training School, and recognizing him as a Mississippi living legend in observation of African-American History Month, and extend best wishes for continued health and prosperity in all the days to come.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be furnished to Major Captain Brady Tonth, Jr., and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
March 4, 2019


SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
March 6, 2019


PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE